

Re: freelance sysadmining [WAS: "Red Hat recommends Windows for consumers"]

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Debian/2003-11/2117.html>

From: Alvin Oga (*aoga_at_ns.Linux-Consulting.com*)

Date: 11/12/03

Date: Tue, 11 Nov 2003 21:13:22 -0800 (PST)
To: ScruLoose <scruloose+debuser@eastlink.ca>

hi ya scruloose

(cool name :-)

On Tue, 11 Nov 2003, ScruLoose wrote:

>>>> *Basic Plan:*
>>>> *When a patch for your distro is released, I will patch the system. I will*
>>>> *also set up a firewall customized for your needs. Whenever you feel you need*
>>>> *a kernel upgrade, I'll custom-compile a new kernel for your system.*
>>
>> *great idea and plan ... but ...*
>>
>> *- everybody can do this ??? and does ...*
>
> *Targeted for home users who are currently stuck in Windows-land?*
> *_who_ exactly is doing this, and how much are they charging?*

most of the PC stores areound here will install linux for you
along with all of the apps you wanted
and usually the distro you pick ...

- whether that is good install or not is for you to decide
or someone that charges \$\$\$ for "real installs" and why its
done their way, vs the generic pc gorrilla at the local pc stores

- most of the pc stores will install it for free and/or about \$25-\$50
range to install linux or windoze
- fries, central, compusa, microdata, dozens's of local pc stores
and hundreds more of online webstore that sells PCs and doesnt
have a local street address even if they are in town cause
they say "san jose" and/or a 408 area code (fax machine for orders)

other people "who" are doing basic linux support are the ones that arre
at your local linux users group meetings and probably in this mailing

list too

- some have a real job vs doing "linux support 24x7"
- most do the "linux support" on the side for friends and family

> > > > *Premium Plan:*

> > > > *You get the basic plan, plus I will install/compile and configure any packages you want.*

> >

> > *installing is anywhere from 5 minutes to 5 hrs ... or 5 days (raidtesting)*

> > *– depending on ...*

> *[lots of stuff]*

>

> *I would assume that the installation of a pre-packaged generic desktop*

> *solution would be included in the basic package.*

if they wanted it to jump up and down and go to the moon, than the customers usually expect it to do that ... esp after they have asked and said what they wanted and how much they were willing to pay

- how much time to make it jump thru the hoops is "[y]our" problem

> *OTOH, nstalling "any packages you want" might want to be a per-labour kind of offer. This could easily get out of hand if it's just "included"...*

that is where the initial problems start ...

add the other problems of:

- i hooked up the network like you said ... it didnt work
- email used to work, now it doesnt... please come fix it now
- how come it doesnt print
- blah used to work ... not it doesnt .. please come fix it now

– after a few of those same questions from the same people .. you will soon have a dilenna of fixing it for them or telling them to go find another family friend to solve the [same] problem for the 10th time for free

- usually their problems will occur when its critical to them and/or your away on vacation, or during your dinner or ??

– 1hr of free help will grow into 5hrs of free help and than 50hrs of free help and will keep growing till you say "enuff"

- if its \$5/hr or \$25/hr or whatever, it will grow out of hand

– how much free time do you wanna keep will be the deciding factor

- you're obviously not doing support for friends and family because of \$\$ for a living

>

> *Alvin, you seem to be thinking in terms of targeting big businesses and*

> *"crafting a solution" collaboratively with them.*

Debian–User: Re: freelance sysadmining [WAS: "Red Hat recommends Windows for consumers"]

yup .. gave up on friends and family and small business years ago ..
– they always make promises to pay or send you more customers
whom in turn doesn't pay ...

– increasing the \$\$\$\$hr or providing pre–defined services for fixed
prices/terms/conditions is a start .. but that line will soon gray
out, and time will dictate what that "original support agreement was"

> *The whole point of Vikki's question (and my suggestion that prompted it)*
> *was to target PC end–users at home.*

it'd be okay ... as long as its NOT friends and family...
its 1000x easier to say, enuff, go find another "free tech support" folks

> *Well, it's good enough for most of the people who are geek enough*
> *to have gone out and installed Linux on their own. That's a very*
> *different group of people from the home users who know they hate MS, but*
> *have no interest in learning to set up and administer a Linux box.*
> *If someone offers a pre–installed & configured Linux desktop setup with*
> *an administration plan, at a consumer–friendly price...*

if people are looking for support ... they will come find you ...
and will have check in hand (or corporate budget approved for the
task)

trying to convince them that *foo–linux* distro is better than blah–linux
and 1000x better the that redmond company will go nowhere ...
– if they cannot do what they used to be able to do,
you're dead for telling them youc an make linux jump thru
the hoops and all their problems are solved

– the machine will die ... and it will die when you're not
there to fix it for them ...

people that are willing to gamble on "new people", new support folks
etc hav already decided they gave up on what they were doing and looking
for some handholding from new tech support folks ...

– and or have specific tough problems to solve ...
like why doesnt xxx driver work for this yyy–widgets under
blah linux install

its 100x easier to solve those tough problems for good \$\$\$
when they come looking for answers ... usually after they
are done with support from their friends, family, coworkers
and the various mailing lists and howto
(and yes... it'd help if one/[you] already solved that problem
(in the past too ...

>
> *In terms of making a monthly support plan, I'd say the best bet is to*

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> *design the system to need as little maintenance as possible and keep the*
> *monthly fee _really_low_. Maybe even make it a small annual fee*
> *instead.*

if done right ... linux doesn't need any weekly/monthly maintenance
just like windoze doesnt need any weekly/monthly maintenance
until the probelm becomes obvious that it does becasue soemthing broke

– some of my machines haven't been patched in 3 years..
and i still use it .. daily ..

– if its NOT broken, dont play with it !!!

– opposite way, is to apply all patches daily, hourly ...
and i do that too ... just depends ...

– why it broke and how to fix it is the difference between linux and
windoze

c ya
alvin

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